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DREAMY GARDENS

WANG JIA BLENDS OIL PAINTING WITH CHINESE BRUSH
TECHNIQUES TO CREATE AN ART STYLE SHE TAGS AS
FEMININE, INNOCENT AND CLASSICALLY CHINESE. **P.4**



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FEATURE

Special Interests, Poor Planning Collide in Ongoing Villa Prohibition

BY YANG XIN

In spite of a decade-long moratorium, real estate listings reveal that Beijing and Shanghai's limited available land continues to be funneled into costly villas.

The Ministry of Land and Resources first enacted restrictions on villa construction in 2003, prohibiting the development of low-density residential properties. In 2006, it reiterated and strengthened that prohibition to target villas.

Four years after that, the ministry strengthened its prohibition in another announcement published with the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development. The State Council also banned the sale of land to villa developers.

In 2012, the ministry and the National Development and Reform Commission jointly issued an updated version of the prohibition, requiring that the plot ratio of all residential property development must not be less than 1.0.

But with nine documents banning villa construction on the national level, how are so many "strictly prohibited" projects being approved?

Fast-and-Loose Rules

The Ministry of Land and Resources was quick to point its official finger at real estate developers being in bed with greedy local officials who have little respect for national law.

But that ignores all the loopholes that exist within the prohibition regulation itself – problems that even Xinhua was reporting on as early as 2006.

Government agencies have never agreed on a definition of "luxury villa." The only reference they have ever given is the plot ratio. As for the height, dwelling size, development area and price of a villa, no specific criteria have been given.

Such vague language gives property

developers plenty of room to play with the rules.

By distributing the houses in different dwelling sizes, developers can easily ensure the overall plot ratio meets the government's requirements. A sales agent for Vanke's Guancheng Villa told Xinhua that buyers can essentially designate the plot ratio as they wish.

In naming these houses, developers call their developments semi-detached villas, duplexes and townhouses to avoid invoking the word 'villa.'

The Huarun Bahao Yuan villa project, which sprawls along the scenic Chaobai River in Shunyi District, has 60 freestanding villas, all of which have a plot ratio of no more than 0.5, Xinhua reported.

A salesperson for "Dianshan Lake No. 1", a villa cluster around Dianshan Lake in Kunshan, Jiangsu province told Xinhua that the villas in the project have a plot ratio of no less than 0.6. But a pre-sale permit shows the villas were built in 2013 and granted sale qualifications.

To avoid government regulations, many villa developers label their properties as "foreign-style residences," a salesperson told Xinhua.

Developers have good reasons to take the risk. Most villas are built in suburban areas where land prices are much lower. The construction cost could be as low as a few hundred thousand yuan and may sell for tens of millions.

Villas bring much higher profits than common residences, a real estate insider who refused to be named told Xinhua.

For the local government, land finance is the ultimate motivation for them to collaborate with property developers.

A report by Xinhua News in 2012 found that the income generated from land grant fees, value taxes and deed taxes in a villa project was many times higher than a common residence project. Their development also offered a stronger boost to the local economy.

Loose Punishment

Beyond that, insiders have warned of the low cost of breaking the rules.

The case of Poly Real Estate in 2010 is the best example. Media reported on their plans to develop villas in Guangzhou with the support of the local government. But the Guangzhou Land Resource & Urban Planning Committee said the homes were "not villas but low-rise dwellings" – a trick of words possible only because the country lacks an official definition of villa.

The case ended with a fine of 5 percent of the villas' construction cost, which totaled a paltry 1.67 million yuan.

"This is the equivalent to a 20,000 yuan fine on each villa, which could be sold for 5 million to 6 million yuan. For developers, that's a drop in the bucket," said Hu Gang, an associate professor at the School of Management in Jinan University.

Another illegal villa case exposed in Daqing city, Heilongjiang province in 2012 came to the attention of the ministry. The local officials responsible for its approval were punished with a verbal warning and administrative sanctions.

Enforcement Unlikely

Many insiders doubt the rationality of the prohibition.

The original ban was intended to enhance the economic use of land and prevent its extravagance. On the surface that's logical, as China is always short on land resources.

But the truth may not be so.

In the book "What to Do With China's Real Estate?" independent writer Chang Qing argues that mainland cities are learning from Hong Kong and allowing only a small amount of land to be developed and traded in the market. It's an example of "hunger marketing."

In the China National Land Utilization Plan (2006 – 2020) published by the State Council in 2008, urban construction accounted for only 0.33 percent of overall land use. Since only 30 percent of all urban constructions are residential estates, that means that only 0.11 percent of the nation's land is used for private residences.

In US and Japan, the proportions are 3.1 and 4.2 respectively.

Theoretically, China is not short of land. The present situation of land shortage may be the result of artificial manipulation, Chang wrote.

That conclusion was confirmed by Cai Jiming, a professor of Tsinghua University. The pursuit of political achievement has inspired government officials to emphasize industrial land development because it generates more growth in GDP and tax revenue, two key markers of government performance reviews, Cai said.

The ministry estimated that between 2003 and 2010, more than 43 percent of China's approved construction products were dedicated to industrial use: residential projects accounted for only 24 percent.

In most foreign countries, industrial lands would occupy no more than 20 percent of urban constructions with 45 percent allocated to residential buildings. That would explain why cities with even scarcer land resources such as New York City and Tokyo are still able to build villas. ■

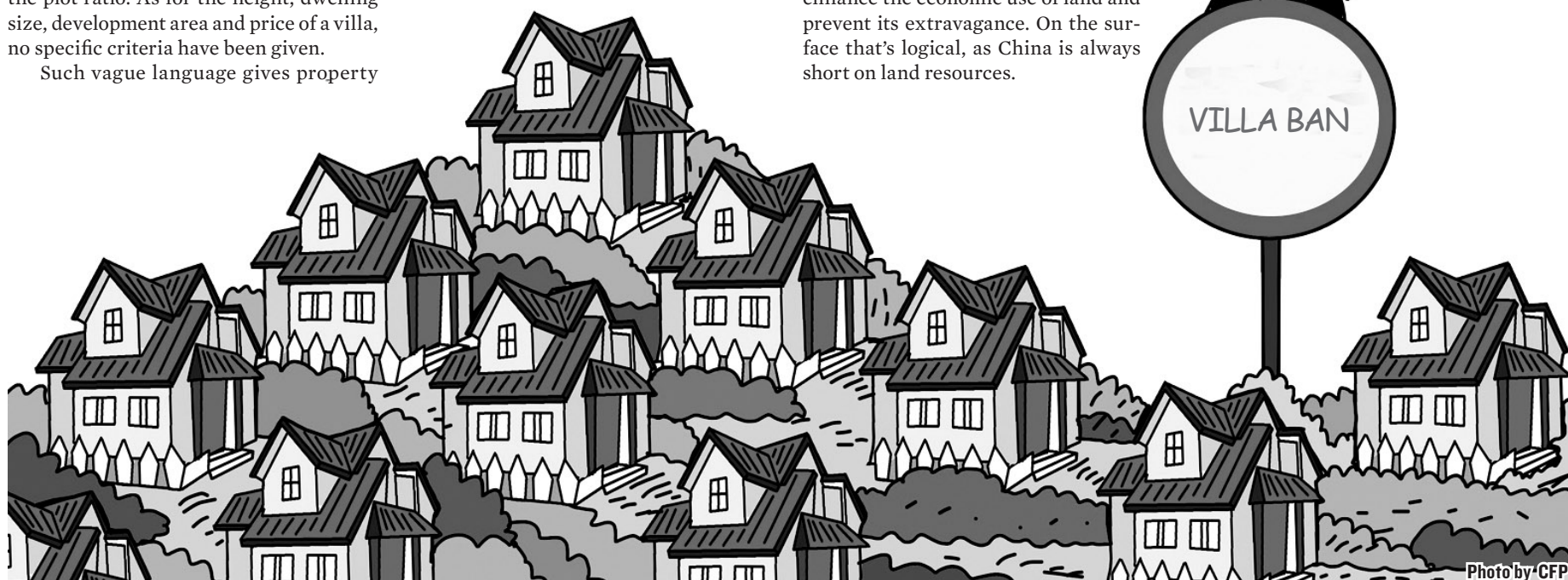
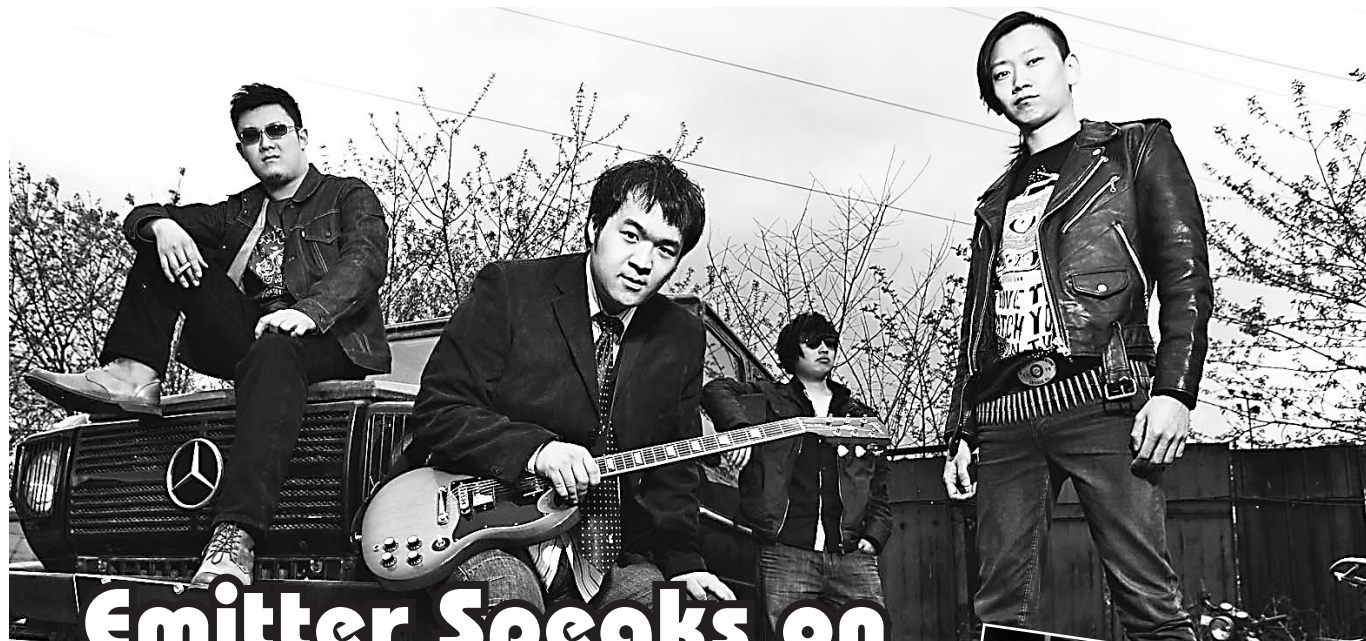


Photo by CFP

MUSIC



Emitter Speaks on Shortcomings of the Beijing Scene

BY DIAO DIAO

Seven years isn't a long time in the Beijing indie scene, but for the four members of Emitter it has been the learning experience of a lifetime.

The band is the project of four men in their mid-20s: band leader Xing Shuo, guitarist Zhang Weinan, bass player Guo Wenwang and drummer Lü Pin.

Xing says he got into music because of his father, a crazy fan of classical and easy listening who made sure Xing's childhood was spent surrounded by vinyl albums.

"My father had such a big collection, and he always had something going on the turntable. One day he was surprised to find that I was tapping along to the music," Xing said. Xing's father enrolled him in several classical music classes.

"I didn't even know there were other forms of music until I was nine. I happened to hear a pop song, and then I gradually learned about rock," he said. After that, Xing started to learn guitar.

By high school, Xing was obsessed and wanted to drop out of school to pursue a musical career. His father responded by smashing all his albums. That was the day Xing left his home.

"As time went on, my parents learned they have to respect a young adult's decisions," Xing said. "I understood they just wanted me to follow the path of a normal child. We compromised, and I went to a music school where I met my friends and built the band."

"The band was called Emitter because everything in life is an output. When we curse, our mouth is an emitter. When we punch, our fist is an emitter. When we want to express our feelings, good or bad, happy or angry, music is an emitter," Xing said.

Xing took a job at a music company after graduating. Xing thought his interest would help him to work harder, but he soon became depressed.

The company Xing worked for signed many pioneer bands such as Nanwu, Hanggai and Iron Kite. Xing was in charge of their advertising. "I was a musician, but I was working for other musicians. It made me feel bad and guilty because they were all things I should be doing for my own band," Xing said.

But the job did teach him the economics of China's indie market.

With the experience from that first job and Xing's effort to promote his own band, Emitter gained more attention.

Xing recalled one show where Emitter was the last band of the night. Many of the listeners were already on their way out, but they turned around as soon as he started to play.

The band won the first prize of Tiger Translate in 2011 and they shared the stage with the Taiwanese band May Day in 2012.

But stage time is not what Emitter is after. "A lot of people in the industry told me albums are the musical equivalent of a business card, but I think they are the only evidence to prove a band exists and is good," Xing said.

But his opinions may matter little in China, where listeners are fickle and tastes are largely determined by the whims of mass media.

"Listeners can lose their way, but we don't," Xing said.

Xing recalled one conversation with Laowu, the guitarist of Tang Dynasty, when he was still in music school. "Ten years ago he asked me if I liked music and playing guitar. I said yes. He asked how much I liked music. I said I had given up everything for a career in music. He told me to think about the question again in 10 years," Xing said.

"Now I'm 26, and I think Laowu was actually trying to make me think about how I would withstand such a complicated music environment," he said.

While talent and skill are required to understand music and develop a creative and new sound, they play little role in the success of Chinese band. Concerts and music festival deals are made on the basis of personal connections and social influence.

"The biggest problem in the Chinese music scene isn't money, even though a lot of bands are struggling there. It's the unfairness that so many talented artists never even get the chance to present their work," Xing said.

"Listeners with a limited understanding of music and venues out to make quick cash create strange barriers to entry for artists. A lot of great bands fail simply because their members aren't handsome enough," he said. ■



Photos by Emitter

LIVE SHOW ROUNDUP

Beijing boasts one of the world's most vibrant indie music scenes. Support our local artists with a trip to one of this week's live performances!

Rise to Fall @ Mao Live House

Rise to Fall is a band from Spain. The band has the rhythm of Swedish death metal, soft melodies and roaring vocals. Founded in 2010, the band released its first album, *Restore the Balance* that same year. That won the attention of Ettore Rigott, the mind behind Italian band Disarmonia Mundi, who helped secure a worldwide release through Coroner Records.

January 15, 8:30-11:30 pm
111 Gulou Dong Dajie, Dongcheng
80 yuan (pre sale), 120 yuan (at door)

Luigu Rubino @ Hot Cat Club

Luigu Rubino is a pianist and composer from Italy. He started to learn piano and pipe organ at 10 with foreign teachers and became the keyboardist in neo-classical band Ashram. Luigu also used to be a member of several bands such as Argine and Corde Oblique. He recently released his first album, *A Theme for the Moon*.

January 15, 8:30-10 pm
46 Fangjia Hutong, Dongcheng
120 yuan (pre sale), 150 yuan (at door)

Indie Singer Session @ 69 Cafe

Indie singers Chen Hongyu, Ma Yuyang and Ma Xiao are coming to 69 Cafe. Chen Hongyu started composing in 2004 and released his first album last July. Ma Yuyang is a folk singer that sings both noisy and soft music. Ma Xiao is from Yinchuan, Ningxia province and just graduated from university.

January 15, 9-11 pm
109 Nanluogu Xiang, Dongcheng
47 yuan (pre sale), 57 yuan (at door)



LENA
WILLIKENS
[CÓMEME]

Lena Willikens @ Migas

German musician Lena Willikens is coming to Beijing Migas. Lena is an excellent DJ, and she released her EP album *Phantom Delia* with six songs. Lena plays various kinds of music. Shao and Metro Tokyo will be the warm up acts.

January 15, 11-11:30 pm
81 Sanlitun Beijie, Chaoyang
60 yuan (pre sale), 80 yuan (at door)

ARTISTS



The Artist Wang Jia

Beauty of Chinese Landscape Gardens Blooms in Wang's Creation

BY SHU PENGQIAN



Quiet Night

Wang Jia blends Western oil painting with Chinese brush techniques to create an art style she tags as feminine, innocent and classically Chinese. Her current work falls into three series: *Search Dream*, *Pick Up Dream* and *Painting from Life*.

Among all the works in her *Search Dream* series, "Sincere Love in Autumn" (2010) is Wang's favorite. This painting depicts a girl who is stylized like an anime character who rests against a wall while thinking. After completing "Sincere Love in Autumn," Wang chose to frame it and hang it in her home rather than sell it. She says the image is an antidote for her daily annoyances.

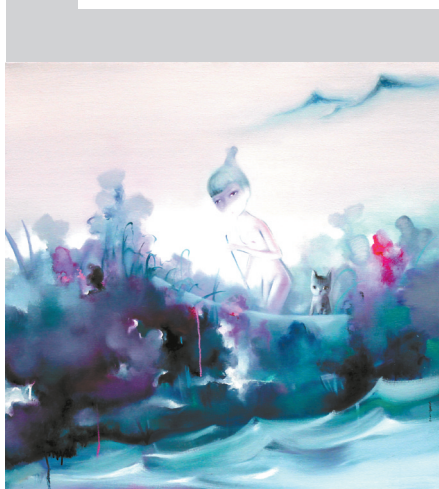
"The content of this painting is simple and its color is so light," Wang said. "It is a direct expression of girl's softness and tranquility. I feel peace every time I look at it."

The girl appears frequently in Wang's other paintings. In "Blue Night," she is lying on artificial hills; in "Little Tailor," she is pondering with her back against a wall; in "Blooming," she is sitting in a garden and watching the sunrise.

But while other artists use such recurring character to insert themselves into their work, Wang insists she is not a self portrait. "I wish she were me, but I



Chinese Landscape Garden 25



Dreamy Shadow



Youth: Tour in Garden

know she is more perfect."

Another painting, "Youth: Tour in Garden," which took Wang the longest time to create, seems to combine modern and classical elements.

This painting portrays a woman in a long dress standing on a boat in a southern garden. The image reveals obvious classical influences, but the pink toy in her hands seems out of place. "I aimed to express conflicted feelings through the arrangement. It's tradition mingling with the modern – ancient objects conflicting with new ones."

Travel is one of Wang's favorite hobbies. She likes walking the streets, exploring new cities and touching history. The gardens of southern China are her favorite scenes, and they can be found in her paintings' backdrops.

Born in Inner Mongolia, Wang had never seen such varied scenery until her first trip to Suzhou, Jiangsu province in the winter of 2004. It was the first time that she saw something other than the sprawling prairies of her hometown. Since then, Wang has been enchanted by China's picturesque south.

"Landscape gardens in southern China were mostly built by ancient literary men," Wang said. "They bear ancient



Chinese Landscape Garden 2



Transform to Butterfly

designers' traditional aesthetic conceptions, and obviously, the characteristic of these landscape gardens suits my taste in traditional culture."

Wang said adapting to loneliness is essential for becoming an artist. As a child, she spent isolated days indoors with her paints, where she would learn from her father, an expert draftsman.

When Wang was six or seven years old, her grandpa told her mother she was good at observing and that she should be allowed to do what interests her. The supportive family left her with few barriers to her dream career in art.

When she isn't painting, Wang teaches at Luoyang Normal University in Henan province.

But she still introduces herself as a professional artist instead of a teacher – only one of those vocations has been a lifelong pursuit.

"Teaching occupies a great deal of my time, but it gives me a chance to shift my brain and develop fresh ideas as I communicate with students," Wang said. ■

artand.cn/gudianmao

A TRAVEL

Historic Churches in Beijing

BY SIMINA MISTREANU

Aside from its Buddhist and Daoist temples and mosques, Beijing also has numerous historic churches. Many were demolished and rebuilt several times over the past few centuries as they fell victim to earthquakes, fires and popular revolts. Today, some are caught in-between global and Chinese religious administrations.

Most lack the rich artwork of European churches and instead feature locally inspired details, such as Chinese gazebos and icons of Mary and infant Jesus with Asian features.

Visitors attend religious services, Bible study and choir, but also come to take selfies and pictures with the churches as the backdrop. Here are some of Beijing's best-known churches.

Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception

The Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, also known as Xuanwumen Church or South Church (Nantang), is the oldest Catholic church in Beijing. It was built in 1605 during the Ming dynasty. When Italian Jesuit Matteo Ricci arrived in Beijing, the Wanli Emperor allowed him to build a small chapel next to his residence by the Xuanwumen city gate.

The church was expanded and became a cathedral in 1690, when Beijing received its first Catholic bishop. A decade later it was enlarged and renovated into a European-style building.

During the 18th century, the church was destroyed by two earthquakes and a fire, and rebuilt each time with the emperors' support. It was confiscated by the Qing government in the 19th century and razed to the ground during the Boxer Rebellion in 1900, along with most churches in Beijing.

Its current structure dates from 1904. The church holds masses in English, Latin and Chinese on Sundays, as well as masses in Chinese and Latin during the week.

Gangwashi Church

Gangwashi Church is a Protestant church that was built during the 1860s with sponsorship from the London Missionary Soci-

ety. Its name can be translated into Crock and Tile Market Church.

Like the Cathedral of Immaculate Conception, Gangwashi Church was also destroyed during the Boxer Rebellion in 1900, which targeted foreigners and Chinese Christians.

The church was rebuilt in 1903, and in 1922 it merged with China Christian Church. The church holds masses in Chinese and English, as well as a Korean mass on Sunday afternoons. On a recent Saturday, Chinese worshippers were singing on stage in the church's main hall, while in a back room, a small group of foreigners were holding Bible study.

Former US President George W. Bush attended Sunday services at Gangwashi Church with his wife, Laura, during a state visit in November 2005.

Church of the Savior

Another establishment with a rich history is Church of the Savior, also known as Xishiku Church or North Church (Beitang). The Catholic church was originally built in 1703 on land near the Forbidden City bestowed by the Kangxi Emperor to the Jesuits after two priests helped him recover from an illness.

In 1887, the church was moved and rebuilt at its current location at the request of the Guanxu Emperor, who wanted to make space for Zhongnanhai Park. Its Gothic architecture, with pointed steeples and window ornaments, was designed by Lazarist Bishop Pierre-Marie-Alphonse Favier.

During the Boxer Uprising, Favier led the cathedral's defense against a crowd of about 10,000 people. More than 3,900 people, mostly women and children, found refuge inside the church.

Today, the church blends Western and Eastern influences, with its Gothic south façade flanked by two Chinese pavilions that are housing tablets describing the church's construction and relocation.

Inside, the tall poles are decorated with vertical red stripes with Chinese calligraphy. The nooks on each side of the altar display Chinese icons of



St. Joseph's Church



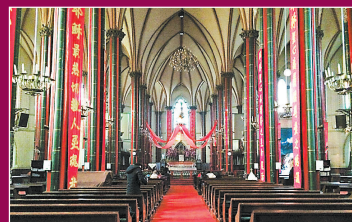
Photo by Pinterest.com



St. Michael's Church



Church of the Savior



Gangwashi Church



Photos by Simina Mistreanu

Madonna and the Child. One of the icons features a Chinese Mary and infant Jesus clad in imperial robes of the Qing Dynasty. The icon is said to have originally been painted by an unknown foreigner in Shanghai and destroyed during the Cultural Revolution. Hong Kong artist Zhu Jiaju recreated it.

St. Joseph's Church

St. Joseph's Church, also known as Wangfujing Church or East Cathedral (Dongtang), is the second-oldest Catholic church in Beijing. It was built in 1655 by Jesuit missionaries on land donated by the Shunzhi Emperor of the Qing Dynasty.

In the 18th and 19th centuries, the church was destroyed by an earthquake and a fire. Foreign missionaries who came to China during the Second Opium War rebuilt it in 1860, only to have it completely destroyed during the 1900 Boxer Rebellion.

In 1904, the church was rebuilt in its current Romanesque Revival style. It was used as a middle school in the 1950s and closed during the Cultural Revolution. Today, the church is managed by the Chinese Patriotic Catholic Association, a state association that supervises China's Catholics.

Statues and icons of St. Joseph holding infant Jesus are displayed both inside and outside the church.

St. Michael's Church

St. Michael's Church is the old French embassy church, built in 1904 by French missionaries. The embassy has since relocated from the area south of Wangfujing.

The church is one of the smallest Catholic churches in Beijing. It follows a European Gothic style and is memorable for its white statue of an angel above its main entrance, also visible from outside the gate.

The church was remarkably well preserved through the 20th century. During the Cultural Revolution, it was placed under the administration of an elementary school and used as an assembly hall. Its colorful stained glass windows are recent replacements of the originals, which had been brought from France. ■



ENTERTAINMENT



Photos by douban.com

New Film Laopao'er Features Beijing Locals

BY DIAO DIAO



If 10 is the top score for a new film, viewers say Laopao'er should score a 9.9. The only criticism seems to be of a few actors who tried to imitate the Beijing dialect.

Laopao'er is a Beijing dialect word that refers to the classic image of the Beijinger:

an unemployed man wandering around the city with a birdcage while on the hunt for amusement.

The film's Liuye is a typical laopao'er.

As a 50-something man, Liuye used to be a powerful and aggressive figure in his Old Beijing community. But redevelopment brought huge changes to Liuye's life.

Like many old men of the hutong, Liuye walks his birds, interferes in his neighbors' family disputes, complains about his life and watches the days go by. But one day, he comes into severe conflict with his son Xiaobo.

Xiaobo leaves home and ends up in trouble with Xiaofei, a rich heir out to assert his privilege. To save his son, Liuye decides to return to society.

Together with his old crew, Mensan'er, Huaxiazi and Dengzhao'er,

the four men confront a new generation of Beijing gangsters only to learn their old way of solving problems no longer works. Helpless, Liuye is forced to come to grips with the death of his era as his health crumbles.

Audiences described the film as "a fight between old Beijing gangsters and young Beijing gangsters." But the reason that the film snagged more than 700 million yuan in ticket sales and an 8.5-star rating on Douban goes beyond its story.

The film captures the Beijing spirit that has been too often missed by directors from other parts of China.

Old Beijing people value justice, integrity, order and friendship more than life, and the characters in the film are a reflection of that dying culture.

Huaxiazi (played by Xu Qing), Liuye's lover, is the typical Beijing woman who hands all of her possession to Liuye without a second thought when he needs her help. She is beautiful, decisive and not restrained like most Beijing girls.

Mensan'er (played by Zhang Hanyu) became friends with Liuye after the two got in a fight during childhood. He's a template for the city's strength and pride.

But Dengzhao'er (played by Liu Hua) represents another kind of Beijing men. Dengzhao'er is a coward who wants to fight but he doesn't dare to. People like Dengzhao'er favor their friends but often end up being the ones in need of help.

Liuye (played by Feng Xiaogang), the star of the film, represents the average Beijinger. When Mensan'er is in jail, Liuye spends all his money to get him released. When Dengzhao'er is bullied by others, Liuye jumps to his defense.

But the selling point of the movie is the real Beijing dialect spoken by its actors. Feng Xiaogang is an internationally famous director, accomplished comedian and a native Beijinger. His manner of speaking and facial expressions are very natural.

Xu Qing, Zhang Hanyu, Liu Hua and director Guan Hu are also Beijingers who understand the local character.

While exaggerated, the film reminds most local viewers of what life was like before modernity came to the capital. ■

Zhihu Publishes Law Course for the Common Man

BY DIAO DIAO

Questions about workers' rights and legality can confuse both newcomers and people with years of work experience. *The Goddess of Justice Never Opens Her Eyes*, published this month, provides readers with professional and useful advice on using basic law.

The book was compiled by Zhihu, a popular online discussion site that has a

legal section where users can ask questions, share experiences and get answers.

In the three years since its founding, Zhihu has climbed to become one of the Top 100 websites ranked on Alexa.cn. It has a user base of nearly 40 million specialists in the fields of technology, business, culture and the sciences.

But law questions are the most

common, according to the statistics collected by Zhihu.

The new book includes the most useful answers as voted by Zhihu users. Lawyers, judges and prosecutors also contributed their own suggestions.

The book is full of case studies and experiences, as well as suggestions about potential risks in work. ■

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Q CLASSIFIEDS

DINING



Conrad Beijing F&B

Come in from the cold and indulge your desire for molten cheese with a French Savoie Cheese fondue at Chapter. Chapter is a "gourmet library" where creative flavors are presented in a unique setting reminiscent of grand European libraries. The platters of Charcuterie, boiled potatoes and crusty bread are the perfect way to shake off the winter chill and break bread with friends and family.

Conrad Beijing is the new icon in Beijing for today's global travelers who appreciate worldly style and sophistication with local inspiration. The hotel's 289 spacious, contemporary guestrooms feature 3-meter-high ceilings, floor-to-ceiling windows with picturesque views of Tuanjie Lake Park, the iconic CCTV building and the captivating Beijing skyline.

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- ⌚ 6 - 9:30 pm, Monday to Wednesday
- 📍 1st Floor, Conrad Beijing
- 💰 400 yuan (15 percent service fee)
- ☎ (010) 6584 6270

NIGHTLIFE



Xian Bar Hosts Event Imperial Star Ship

Xian Bar will have an Imperial Star Ship party on January 23, where the head of Beijing's 501st Legion - the worldwide Star Wars costuming organization - will be on hand to answer any and all trivia questions by fellow geeks hoping to stump him for various prizes. East Hotel's Domain will host to a pop-up store selling Star Wars wares from January 11-30.

- ⌚ 10 pm - midnight, January 23
- 📍 1/F, EAST Beijing, 22 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang
- ☎ (010) 8414 9810



Multi-Grammy Award Winning Superstar DJ Jazzy Jeff

Live Superstar and Music Legend Jazzy Jeff makes his Beijing debut at Room 79, kicking off the new year with a huge bang!

Jazzy is a household name across the world. He has won three Grammy Awards, three American Music Awards, two Soul Train Music Awards and two NAACP Awards. He is also a DMC World Champion. In 2015, Jazzy performed the scratch overdubs for the film *Straight Outta Compton*.

Aside from being a lead actor with Will Smith on the hit TV series *The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air*, Jazzy and Smith have number tracks together. This summer, they will tour internationally with special guest performer Dayne Jordan.

This is a limited-capacity event, so reserve your tickets and tables early while you can.

- ⌚ 10 pm - 2:30 am, January 15
- 📍 Elements Club, West Gate of Worker's Stadium, 58 Gongti Xi Lu, Chaoyang
- 💰 380 yuan

MUSIC



Chris Cron DDC Concert

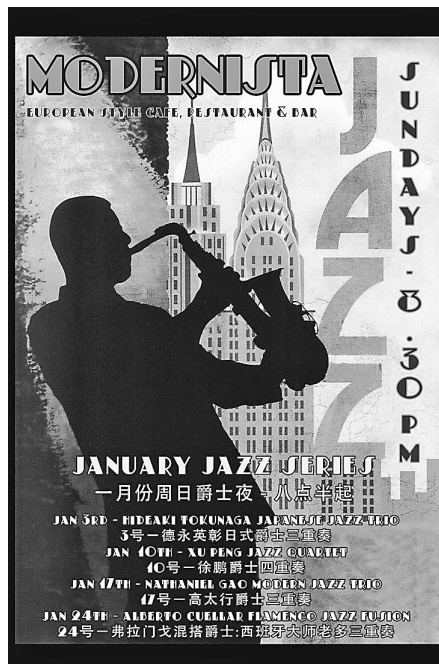
Chris Cron is the former lead singer of WB Records band, Melee, which scored a #1 hit in Japan and The Netherlands with his song "Built to Last." In 2013, after

the band split, Cron and his wife moved to Nashville, in search of a clean slate. After a yearlong hiatus from music, Cron returned as a solo artist with a renewed vision and a batch of songs characterized by a passion for truth and love.

Cron has a big, dynamic voice and throws everything he has into live performances with music influenced by '60s pop', '70s R&B', '80s synth pop and 90s britpop'. He is working on his debut solo album, due out first half of 2016.

Melee is an American rock band from Orange County, California. Formed in 2000, the band consists of Ricky Sans, Chris Cron, Ryan Malloy and Derek Lee Rock. The group released their debut album *Everyday Behavior* under Los Angeles-based independent label Subcity Records in 2004. In 2006, they were signed with major record label Warner Bros Records, and in 2007 made their major record label debut with *Devils & Angels*. In 2010, they released their follow up *The Masquerade* on Warner Bros Records.

- ⌚ 9 - 11:30 pm, January 16
- 📍 DDC, 14 Shanlao Hutong, Dongcheng
- 💰 100 yuan (at door), 80 yuan (presale)



Sunday Jazz: Nathaniel Gao Jazz Trio

Nathaniel Gao is a saxophonist and composer who has been based in Beijing since 2006. He has been a key contributor to the local jazz scene as both a co-leader of the quintet Red Hand as well as a leader of his own quartet and trio. Additionally, Gao has been active in an eclectic range of other musical projects including Three Sergeants Syndrome, The Beijing City Big Band, Afroko Roots and Bu Yiding.

He has performed at the Ninegates Jazz Festival, the MIDI Jazz Festival, the Ditan Park Music Festival, the Chongqing Jazz Festival, Jarasum International Jazz Festival and at major venues in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Chengdu. Gao graduated from UNI in 2006 with BA in music performance and in 2011 completed an MA in jazz performance at the City College of New York.

- ⌚ 9:30 - 11 pm, January 17
- 📍 Modernista, 44 Baochao Hutong, Gulou Dongdajie, Dongcheng

ART

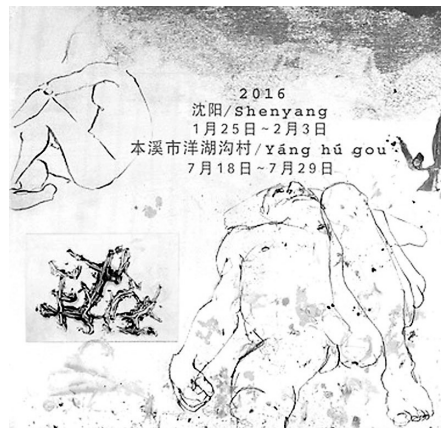


Living Room Coffee Christmas Pop-Up Store

Living Room Coffee's Christmas Pop Up is here to give you some gift ideas for this holiday season! Featuring mini exhibitions from Singapore creative studio Atelier HOKO and Shanghai independent bookstore Bananafish Books, expect to find independent publications, our signature roasted coffee beans, homemade jams and cookies, and other little things from local makers.

Living Room Coffee and Book Design Shop will also jointly organize the Indiepubpub Christmas Party on December 25, 7:30-10:30 pm, where lovers of independent publishing can gather and exchange ideas. There will also be a gift exchange with a twist - participants will have to bring something that they created on their own.

- ⌚ 10 am - 10:30 pm, multiple dates
- 📍 Living Room Coffee, 23 Tan'er Hutong, Xicheng



Sobie's Creative Art Workshops

For anyone pursuing artistic ambitions it can be quite a challenge to develop a personal and distinctive style, to establish direct contact with one's work, a genuine connection.

We organize creative workshops with a strong focus on exploring, experimenting, tearing down the usual boundaries and looking beyond, and this in a contemporary framework and a positive creative atmosphere.

The workshops are adult-orientated and held in English and Chinese. The winter edition 2016 will be held in Shenyang for three days.

- ⌚ 9 am - 5 pm, multiple dates
- 🌐 sobie.net/workshops
- 💰 900 yuan (3 days including materials)

FOODS



Photos by nicpic

Foods for Xiaohan

BY WANG YAN

2016 has arrived: it's time to shrug off old worries and start fresh. No matter what you plan to achieve in the coming Monkey Year, staying healthy is important.

The period from January 5 to January 19 is Xiaohan (mild coldness) according to the traditional calendar. Xiaohan is the 23rd solar term and the fifth during the winter season. Although named mild coldness, the recorded temperatures during this solar term are often lower than the following term Dahan (severe coldness).

According to the *Huangdi Neijing*, one of the oldest texts of Chinese medicine, the three winter months should be a "rest season." The book advises people to wake up early and go outside after the sun comes up. Traditional medical theory believes cold air isn't harmful when the sun is up.

But eating the right food is

equally important.

Chinese medicine considers chicken, lamb, beef and carp the best foods for fighting off cold air. Other foods such as lotus seeds, dried dates, tremella and pig liver are considered good foods for fending off the cold.

Wood ears, black sesame, black beans and soft-shelled turtles are also believed to nourish the kidneys.

One of the most common foods during Xiaohan is Laba porridge. Also known as labazhou, the dish is a porridge eaten on the eighth day of the twelfth month of the traditional calendar.

The day on which it is traditionally eaten is known as the Laba Festival. The earliest form of the dish was cooked with red beans and has since grown to include many kinds of rice, beans, dried fruit, tofu, potatoes, meat and vegetables. According to the Chinese medicine, the ingredients used in the porridge should be good for the kidneys and stomach.

Another popular dish is Qilin weeverfish. In Chinese medicine, weeverfish is considered mild and beneficial for maintaining a person's *qi*, which some practitioners interpret as the foundation of the body's metabolism. The most common dish is steamed weever, but sweet and sour weeverfish is also popular.

Also consider trying pigeon egg soup. Although pigeon egg may sound less appetizing, it is very nutritious. In Chinese medicine, the pigeon egg is believed to help a person's blood circulation and *qi*.

If you are interested in Chinese medicine and its philosophy, start choosing foods that can help to build *qi*. ■



Photo by 3lian



MAKE YOUR OWN WITH THIS RECIPE

Learn to Make Papaya Carp Soup

BY WANG YAN

Eating fish at the beginning of a new year is a Chinese tradition. Like most holiday traditions, it involves a play on words in the phrase "Niannian you yu," meaning each year in abundance. Since both fish and abundance share the pronunciation "yu," eating fish is considered an auspicious way to start the year. Try this carp and papaya soup if you need a new way to prepare your new year's fish.

Ingredients:

- ☐ 1 carp
- ☐ half a papaya
- ☐ 4 slices of ginger
- ☐ scallions
- ☐ salt



Photo by douguo.com

The Steps:

1. Scale and gut the fish. Peel the papaya and remove its seeds. Cube the flesh. Peel the ginger.
2. Oil a pan and begin heating it on your stovetop. When it is 70 percent heated, place the carp in the pan and fry it until both sides turn yellow.
3. Add some water to a wok; add the fried fish and some scallions.
4. Cook the fish over a high flame until the water turns white.
5. Add the ginger and papaya cubes. Cover the wok and continue to boil for 40 minutes.
6. Season with salt before serving.

Nice to Meet You

BY WANG YAN

The beginning of a new year is the best time to reconnect with old friends and meet new ones. What place could be better for that than a restaurant named Nice to Meet You?

The oddly-named restaurant's original Shanghai location was opened in 2014 by Han Han, the bestselling author who published his first book as a teen. It already has three branches in Beijing, but the most popular is located in Chaoyang Joy City.

Many customers praised the restaurant's contemporary and simple decor. It is also filled with samples of Han Han's books and his famous quotes.

Many creative dishes are named after Han Han's famous books including *San Chongmen*, and *Han Zhihan*. Others are given comical names such as "How Long Since You Ate My Tofu," a play on a slang term for inappropriate sexual advances.

The cook also tries to mix Chinese and Western cuisine with oddities like Kung Pao Spaghetti. Although creative, customers seem to be less than keen on the experiment.

Nice to Meet You has long lines during busy hour, so go early if you are hoping to snag a table. ■



Photos by dianping.com

Nice to Meet You Restaurant

6F, Chaoyang Joy City, 10 Chaoyang North Road
☎ (010) 8551 8867